



## *State of Wyoming Military Department Office of the Adjutant General*

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**March 17, 2005**

### **For immediate release**

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**WyMD-05-16**

### **ChalleNGe program funded**

CHEYENNE – Funding for the Wyoming National Guard to implement ChalleNGe, a National Guard youth program, has been earmarked by the State Legislature and the federal government.

The ChalleNGe program is a residence program designed to give at-risk Wyoming youth a chance to succeed. Core components of the program include academics, citizenship, life-coping skills, community service, leadership and physical fitness.

"We're very excited about the opportunities the program can give to Wyoming's at-risk youth," said Col. Steve Smith, Wyoming National Guard Joint Force Headquarters chief of staff. "The program will help up to 200 teenagers each year overcome challenges they are facing in their personal lives."

The students who are accepted into the program must be drug-free and not in any legal troubles. They will spend five months in the program and 12 months in a post program mentoring phase.

During its recent session, the Wyoming Legislature appropriated \$1.12 million to the Wyoming National Guard for the program. The federal government will fund the remaining \$1.68 million of the annual cost associated with ChalleNGe.

“Now that the funding stream has been established, we are in the process of determining a site, hiring staff and developing an application process. Our goal is for the first class to begin early in 2006,” Smith said.